SUNBEAM CREEK ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

PURPOSE STATEMENT

March 2003

Approved by:

_____ Date: _____

John Metcalfe
Regional Manager
Environmental Stewardship Division

_____ Date: _____

Nancy Wilkin
Assistant Deputy Minister
Environmental Stewardship Division

Sunbeam Creek Ecological Reserve
Purpose Statement

Sunbeam Creek Ecological Reserve is located on McBride Peak, 5.5 km northeast of the town of McBride.

The 511 ha ecological reserve encompasses McBride Peak and adjacent summits to the northeast and northwest. These mountains form the western-most flank of the Park Range, immediately adjacent to the Rocky Mountain trench. Mountains in the ecological reserve have glacial-rounded summits unlike the Matterhorn-like peaks of higher mountains further east in the Park Ranges.

A variety of slope aspects and terrain conditions results in a variety of alpine plant communities. Scattered whitebark pine and subalpine fir trees, largely in krummholz form, occur on slopes in the lowest parts of the ecological reserve. Extensive well-drained slopes above treeline are dominated by pink, yellow, and white mountain-heather and white mountain avens.

Primary Role
The primary role of Sunbeam Creek Ecological Reserve is to protect a variety of alpine communities representative of the western edge of the Rocky Mountains.

Known Management Issues	Response
Inappropriate uses (transmitters, ATV's)	Investigate the desirability of changing the designation from an ecological reserve to a Class A provincial park, and issue Park Use Permits.
Recreational use	Due to easy alpine access, the village of McBride promotes the area for recreational use. Designation should be changed to provincial park.

CONSERVATION

Representation

- ecosection — Contributes minimally to the representation of the very well represented Northern Park Ranges Ecosection (32.1%); the ecological reserve contributes only 0.22% of the overall representation of this ecosection.
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant — Very minor contribution to the representation of the ESSF mm1 and ATunp .

Special Feature

Rare/Endangered Values	X	Grizzly bears (blue-listed), wolverine (blue-listed)
Scientific/Research Opportunities		

RECREATION

Representation:

- backcountry
- destination
- travel corridor
- local recreation

	X	Nature appreciation opportunities

Special Opportunities

Education/Interpretation Opportunities	X	Alpine ecology; terrain/vegetation relationships

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Representation

Special Feature

OTHER MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Other Designations

Relationship to Other PAs	X	One of 148 ecological reserves established to protect natural ecosystems and phenomena for research and education purposes across the province.
Co-operative Management Arrangements		
Partnerships	X	Ecological Reserve Warden (Art Carson, appointed

March 1987)

Vulnerability	X	The Conservation Risk Assessment Process identified 2 risk factors (the shape and the size of the ecological reserve) for the ecological reserve and rated them as low significance. Two stressors/threats were identified for the ecological reserve: roadways and ATV/Quad with both rated as low significance.
Relationship to Other Strategies		

Area: 511 hectares

Date of establishment: June 2, 1972